

OPINION 964

ANOMIA PECTEN LINNAEUS, 1758 (BRACHIOPODA): USE OF
PLENARY POWERS TO SET ASIDE THE RULING GIVEN IN
OPINION 224 ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SPECIES

RULING.—(1) Under the plenary powers the Ruling in Opinion 224 that the species figured by J. W. Dalman, 1828, *K. svenska Vetensk.-Akad. Handl.*, **1827** : 110, pl. 1, figs 6a–d, should be identified as *Anomia pecten* Linnaeus, 1758, is hereby withdrawn.

(2) Under the plenary powers the specific name *pecten* Linnaeus, 1758, is to be interpreted as the species represented by the lectotype of *Anomia pecten* Linnaeus, 1758, figured by Brunton, Cocks & Dance, 1967, *Proc. Linn. Soc. Lond.* **178** (2) : 166–167, pl. 1, figs. 22–26.

HISTORY OF THE CASE (Z.N.(S.) 1832)

The present case was submitted to the office of the Commission by Dr. Jan Bergström in November 1967. Dr. Bergström's application was sent to the printer on 15 February 1968 and was published on 24 May 1968 in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **25** : 50–51. Public Notice of the possible use of the plenary powers was given in the same part of the *Bulletin* as well as to the other prescribed serial publications (Constitution Art. 12b; *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **21** : 184). The proposals were supported by Dr. Anthony Wright (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **25** : 201), and Dr. Lemche wrote to point out that the specimen illustrated by Brunton, Cocks and Dance was the lectotype, not the holotype, of *Anomia pecten* since Linnaeus also referred to the specimen of Lister, 1678. This correction was made in the Voting Paper.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

On 28 January 1970 the Members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (70)1 either for or against the proposal set out in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **25** : 51. At the close of the prescribed voting period on 28 April 1970 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes—twenty (20), received in the following order: China, Melville, Bonnet, Jaczewski, Evans, Munroe, Tortonese, Obruchev, do Amaral, Sabrosky, Mayr,† Simpson, Binder, Ride, Brinck, Starobogatov, Forest, Kraus, Alvarado, Mertens.

Negative votes—four (4): Lemche,* Holthuis,* Vokes,* Eisenmann.*

The following comments were made by Commissioners in returning their votes:

Dr. Henning Lemche (2.ii.70): Nothing in the application indicates that

*These negative votes were later withdrawn, see below.

†Conditional vote, see note below.

confusion exists because of the present type direction. If the Linnaean specimen had disappeared there would—so far as I understand it—be no problem. The Commission cannot reverse its decision for formal reasons as those here presented—or its Official Lists would soon become a mess of contradictions.

Dr. L. B. Holthuis (4.ii.70): In order to attain stability in nomenclature, decisions once taken by the Commission should only be repealed in extreme circumstances, where such decisions would cause great confusion. Nowhere in the present application are any ill effects of Opinion 224 indicated. The arguments given have not convinced me of the necessity of repealing the Opinion.

Prof. H. E. Vokes (9.ii.70): This is another case in which stability of nomenclatural practice is disturbed by the discovery of a Linnaean “type” specimen. In the present situation where we are concerned with a form of relatively local distribution, which is neither a generic type-species nor a stratigraphic zonal marker, I believe that preservation of confidence in the stability engendered when a name (and its interpretation) is incorporated on the Official List is a most important factor to be considered. Accordingly I vote against the application.

Dr. E. Eisenmann (17.ii.70): Inclusion of a specimen in the Linnaean collection is not proof, without more, that it was the type or even in the possession of Linnaeus at the time of the description. Before overruling a previous plenary powers decision of the Commission, I should like to know more about usage and have the view of A. Wood who made the application which resulted in the 1948 vote of the Commission.

Prof. Ernst Mayr (6.iv.70): The application is full of contradictions. If it is true that Dalman's figure represents the “species commonly known as *pecten*” then the application is opposed to the principles of the Preamble. I am willing to change my vote if I am assured that the newly selected lectotype actually corresponds to “what is commonly known as *pecten*”.

The substance of the above criticisms was conveyed to the applicant, Dr. Bergström, and as a result of his reply, the following letter was addressed by the Secretary of the Commission to the five Commissioners who voted against the proposals.

“Dr. Jan Bergström asked for the Ruling given in Opinion 224 to be varied so that the specific name *pecten* Linnaeus (*Anomia*) should be attached to the Silurian species represented by a type-specimen in the Linnaean collection instead of to an Ordovician species represented by a figure published by Dalman, in 1828. You and four other Commissioners objected to Dr. Bergström's proposal on the following grounds:

1. That if Dalman's figure represented the species commonly known as *pecten*, the application was contrary to the principles of the Preamble (this objection would be withdrawn if it could be shown that the newly designated lectotype corresponded to that species).
2. That the presence of a specimen in the Linnaean collection is insufficient ground unless supported by evidence of usage.
3. That the species is not shown to be of such importance, either as a type-species or as a horizon-marker, to warrant varying a decision recorded on the Official List.

4. That it has not been shown that the effects of Opinion 224 are so serious as to warrant changing a plenary powers decision.

I therefore wrote on 26 June 1970 to Dr. Bergström, making two points. I asked him, first, if he could show that stability of nomenclature would be seriously upset by the name *pecten* being transferred from the Silurian species with which it is generally associated to an Ordovician species. Secondly, I asked him to clarify a discrepancy between Dr. Alan Wood's original request to the Commission (*Bull.* 1 : 239) and the Ruling given in Opinion 224. Dr. Wood showed that the specimen in the Linnaean collection did in fact correspond to the Silurian species long known as *pecten* and asked that the name be attached to that species. In passing, he mentioned that the characteristics of that species had become known by personal contacts until Dalman (1828) published typical figures. The Ruling in Opinion 224, however, instead of attaching the name *pecten* to the species represented by the Linnaean specimen, attached it to the species represented by Dalman's figure. Dr. Bergström showed that this latter species is an Ordovician one. Thus the effect of the Ruling in Opinion 224 is different from that originally sought by Dr. Wood. The point that I wished Dr. Bergström particularly to deal with was whether the geological horizon of the species figured by Dalman was known to be different from that of the species represented by the Linnaean specimen at the time of the Ruling given in Opinion 224, or whether that difference was only perceived later.

"Dr. Bergström replied on 23 June 1970. He did not deal with the question of usage, doubtless because this is covered by Dr. Wood's original application. I have discussed this point with workers on Lower Palaeozoic brachiopods. All agree that, while the species is not of the first order of importance, it is common and geographically widespread and thus frequently cited in the literature of a number of countries. Inconvenience arising from the transfer of the name would thus be widely resented. On the second point, he tells me that the probable identity and geological horizon of Dalman's species was first discussed by him in 1968 (*Geologica et Palaeontologica* 2 : 1-35). While the species cannot be certainly recognized from Dalman's generalized figure, the mode of preservation indicates that it is probably based, not on a Silurian specimen from Gotland, but on an Ordovician one from Västergötland, most likely a specimen of the species now known as *Coolinia dalmani* Bergström, 1968. However, Dalman mentioned three localities of different geological and palaeontological characteristics. This fact, plus the inadequacy of his figure, makes it impossible to be certain which species he had in mind. Dr. Bergström says that if the effect of the Ruling in Opinion 224 had been to attach the name *pecten* unequivocally to a particular Ordovician species he would not have objected. As it is, that Ruling (1) disturbs the stability of a widely-used name, (2) aims at a result different from that originally sought by Dr. Wood, and (3) produces a confused situation since the species to which the name is to be applied cannot certainly be identified. All these defects would be remedied if his application was approved.

"I am therefore writing to ask if, on the grounds set forth in this letter, you would be prepared to change your vote on V.P. (70)1. I may add that Dr. Bergström's application has in fact been approved by the necessary majority.

I am, however, unwilling to publish the Opinion leaving your well-founded objections without a reply."

The following answers to Mr. Melville's letter were received:

Dr. E. Eisenmann: On the basis of your letter of 10 August 1970, I am willing to go along with the majority of the Commission. You may therefore change my vote on V.P. (70)1. It would be desirable if the additional facts mentioned in your letter were published in connection with the Opinion.

Prof. H. E. Vokes: In response to your letter of 10 August concerning Opinion 224 and the problem of the species represented by Dalman's illustration of *Anomia pecten* Linnaeus, may I say that on the basis of the information contained therein I am perfectly willing to vote for the substitution of the specimen in the Linnaean Collection as the lectotype. The fact that the species cannot certainly be identified from the Dalman figure, and would be of uncertain provenance is to me compelling evidence of need for a change.

Dr. L. B. Holthuis: Your letter of 10 August put my doubts about this case fully at rest and I will be glad to vote for the proposed actions.

Dr. Henning Lemche: I am still most reluctant—in principle—to change anything already on an Official List, but the present case does seem to present a necessity for doing so. What I have now learned suffices to show that things cannot be left as they stand, and Dr. Bergström's proposals are well founded. Therefore, please count my vote with the majority now that I have the relevant information.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the votes cast on Voting Paper (70)1 were cast as set out above, that the proposal contained in that Voting Paper has been duly adopted under the plenary powers, and that the decision so taken, being the decision of the International Commission, is truly recorded in the present Opinion No. 964.

R. V. MELVILLE
Secretary

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

London

4 March 1971